

DPW UPDATE

February 2003

DIBBS Does it Better

Save the County money while putting cash in your own pocket. That's the idea behind D.I.B.B.S., the County's "Do It Better By Suggestion" program. Since its induction in 1958, the County's budget, services, safety and operations have been positively and significantly impacted - not to mention a few wallets.



Just look at some of the suggestions your fellow employees made this past quarter: Bai Wong, from DPW's Wastewater Management section, saved the County \$78,362, earning a D.I.B.B.S. award of \$9,503 for suggesting how to recover reimbursement money from CALTRANS for utilities. Lita Davis, of Road Maintenance, received \$1,675 for saving the County \$12,150 by finding a way to remove and dispose of stockpiles that required stormwater maintenance. Other winners this quarter include Richard Cobb, Sheila Ford and Lisa Lonsdale who each received \$50 for their suggestions.

In FY 2001/02, Kenneth Buccellato of Capital Projects won the maximum \$20,000 payout for his "Streamline Road Design Through Digital Mapping," which saved the County \$194,000. Landfill Management's Greg Weston came up with a "Clean Closure Operation" idea that saved the County \$28,963 and earned him \$4,344.

Are you ready to take home money for your ideas? To submit suggestions to the D.I.B.B.S. Program, County employees fill out Ideagrams, which are available through DPW Administrative Services and Department of Human Resources' Employee Development Division. For more information, call (619) 578-5779, or log onto to <http://cww> and click on "DIBBS."

DPW Employees Win APWA Scholarships

By Jessica Eslinger

Two DPW employees won scholarships from the San Diego and Imperial Counties Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA). Lee Ann Lardy, Senior Real Property Agent at Gillespie Field, and Ezequiel Maldonado, Equipment Operator at Jamacha Road Station, each received \$1,000 scholarships to further their education and professional development with DPW.



Lardy at Gillespie Field

Lardy and Maldonado were honored at an APWA luncheon in December where more than 100 people applauded their personal commitment to the field of public works.

Lardy has already made plans to earn her Senior Member Right of Way Designation, the most prestigious degree offered by the International Right of Way Association (IRWA), in addition to

completing IRWA's Asset Management Certification. The scholarship will cover most, if not all, of the costs for her courses, and if things go as planned, she should have her certification within the next year.

Maldonado's ultimate career goal is to become a construction inspector, so his money will go toward earning an associate's degree and ICBO certification from the International Council of Building Officials.

"I really didn't expect to win," said Maldonado, "now I can become a more valuable employee for DPW."

In all, eight applicants received \$500 - \$100 scholarships. Awards were based on a written personal statement summarizing candidate's backgrounds, interests, achievements, goals and commitment to a career in public works, as well as a supervisor's letter of recommendation.

The Public Works Scholarship Program is an annual event designed to assist public works employees in attaining their

educational goals, building a foundation of future public works leaders.



"Zeke" Maldonado (far left) and his crew hard at work

Training

Make a Difference

by Kirsten Aaboe-Hope, Training

Have you ever been involved in a conflict, or situation where very different points of view seem to be in opposition? Everyone has.

Situations where conflict might arise include: lawns being mowed by early-rising neighbors, your kids' music volume, the traditional vs. the new way of doing things, one person not feeling respected or heard by another, and even how the dishes are stacked. There are as many viewpoints as there are people; diversity is a fact of life. How do we deal successfully with different points of view, especially at work, and achieve our greatest potential?

Here are some meditation guidelines that can help you get through these, and similar uncomfortable situations.

Opening: Set the tone by saying that this is a process where the parties move toward their own resolution. Lay the ground rules: treating each other with respect, allowing each to talk without interruption and maintaining confidentiality.

Uninterrupted Time: Both parties take turns telling their sides of the story. Try to use neutral descriptive language ("music volume" not "loud music"), which can be tricky for the mediator.

The Exchange: Each party should then repeat back to the other what they heard. Party A has brief opportunity to clarify facts, after hearing Party B tell his/her version of Party A's story. The goal of this stage is develop an understanding of the other person's point of view.

When it Worked: Both parties briefly tell the other how it was when it worked between them, what conditions were in place, and what the desired state is. This sets the stage for building a solution.

Brainstorming Options/Building Agreement: Brainstorm ideas for a solution to the conflict. Rules of brainstorming apply: no judgment of ideas, spoken or unspoken; rapid-fire idea-generation; building one idea on another. At this stage, an idea will often emerge as acceptable to both parties.

Closing/Documentation: If a written agreement is indicated, the solution can be written, dated and signed, with any timelines and promises included.

In a successful mediation, both parties come to see the other's viewpoint, and agree to sincerely try to abide by the mutually agreeable solution. We can work together better, making any situation a "win-win" for everyone.

DIVISION NEWS:

Transportation

How Do You Put a Price on a Road?

In July 2001, the County received a letter from the federal government requesting changes to existing accounting standards. Titled GASB 34, the letter ordered price estimates for all County assets, including buildings, land and infrastructure. Barbara Wright of Financial Services is DPW's coordinator for the County-wide project, acting as a liaison between the hired contractor, the Auditor and Controller's Office and DPW staff.



With no previous estimates, the contractor collected dozens of inventories to calculate money values for DPW's roads, culverts, storm drains, bridges, curbs, guardrails and landfills. DPW staff worked diligently, providing maps, materials costs, origination dates and other documents to aid in the final estimation. The result? DPW roads and infrastructure are worth \$1.9 billion.

The process began in July and was completed in early January. Maintenance and construction will continue, as will the depreciation of existing infrastructure, so the value is bound to go up and down.

DPW employees who helped in the process include: Jeff Moody, Eric Swanson, Brian Kruse, Tom Davis, Richard Cobb, Michael Koch, Eileen Lindquist, Lisa Lonsdale, Hung Tran and Steve Maier. Elizabeth Saiz of Pennant Alliance also participated.

Management Services

Lincoln Acres Clean-Up Day

Two hundred thirty cars lined Sweetwater Road January 11 to clean up Lincoln Acres, an unincorporated community just north of National City. For the first time in five

years, an event was set up by DPW recycling staff and residents to rid the area of rusted lawnmowers, tattered couches, worn tires, old car batteries and other junk.

District 1 Supervisor Greg Cox and his staff were instrumental in making the event a success and weren't afraid to get down and dirty with Recycling's Orelia De Braal, J Taylor, Wayne Williams and Mike Wonsidler. Other assistance came from members of the Department of Environmental Health, Alpha Project, EDCO and Debris Box.

"Everyone went above and beyond the call of duty, which was really amazing to see," said De Braal.

Residents brought and dumped their junk, courtesy of funding from a community Development Block Grant. To separate deliveries, stations for metal and appliances, wood, greenwaste, tires, monitors and TV's, and mixed recycling were set up. Clean and reusable items were donated to Goodwill. In all, 40 40-cubic yard boxes of trash were filled, 400 tires were collected and lots of landfill space was saved.



County Supervisor Cox helps sort through junk deliveries



The "Recycling Crew" and a volunteer from Debris Box

Warner Wins State Award

For more than four years, DPW's recycling staff has worked with Warner School District to establish and popularize community recycling programs, and their efforts finally earned them a little State recognition.

In December, the California Integrated Waste Management Board (CIWMB) honored Warner with an Ambassador School Award for acting as a "model of integrity" to backcountry areas. Only eight schools in California were recognized for their establishment of successful environmental projects in rural school districts and communities.

Located in County District 5, Warner will receive \$60,000 to continue the development of resourceful hands-on school and community conservation projects.

Several years ago, recycling staff solicited Used Oil Block Grant and various recycling grant monies to set up an oil change station at a Warner school's auto shop and a campus community recycling center. Their goal was to clean up the backcountry by increasing access to free recycling, but the result was much more triumphant; now the programs created by our recycling staff and Warner serve as examples for rural school districts and communities across the state.